

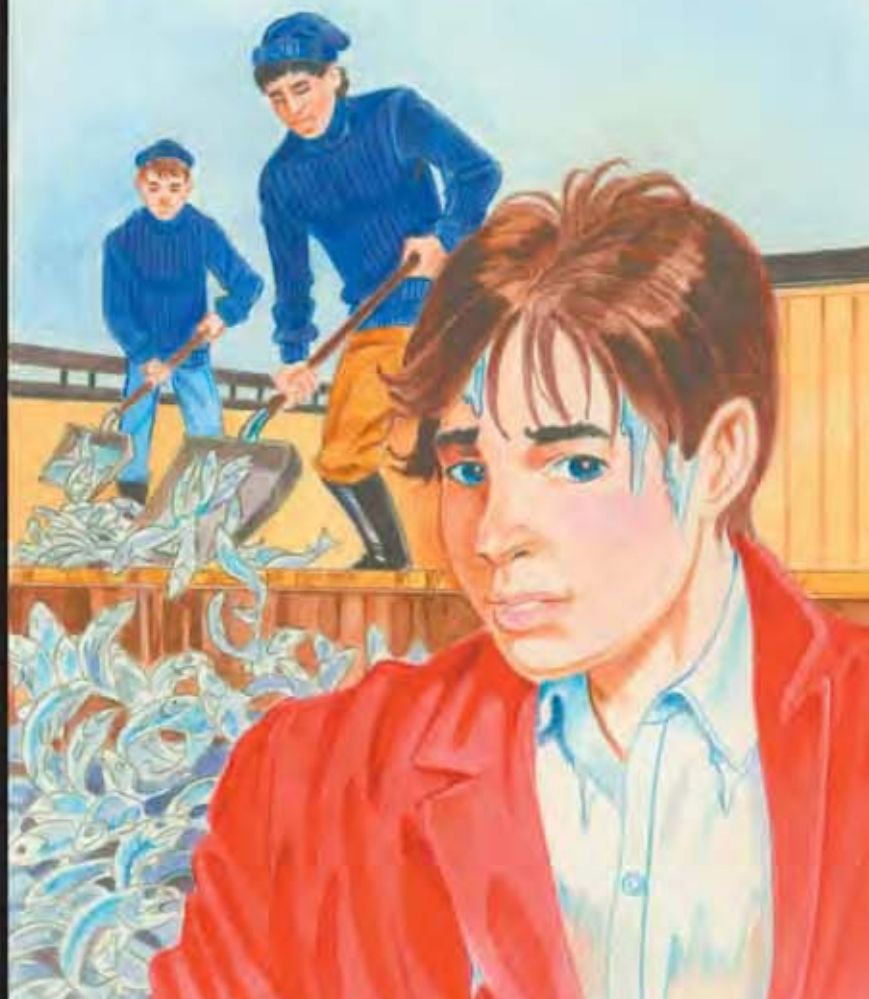
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CAPTAINS COURAGEOUS

RUDYARD KIPLING

SADDLEBACK
Classics



CAPTAINS COURAGEOUS

RUDYARD KIPLING

ADAPTED BY

Janice Greene

SADDLEBACK *Classics*

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1 **Boy Overboard!**

The huge ocean liner blew its whistle again and again. The whistle warned the small fishing boats to keep their distance. The liner rolled and lifted in the North Atlantic fog. The fog blew into the smoking room, for the door had been left open. A man stepped inside, banging the door shut.

“That Harvey Cheyne’s the biggest nuisance around,” the man snorted.

“Yeah, I know that kind,” a white-haired German added. “America is full of that kind.”

A man from New York said, “Pshaw! There isn’t any real harm in Harvey Cheyne. He’s more to be pitied than anything. They’ve dragged him from hotel to hotel since he was a kid. I was talking to his mother just this morning. She’s a lovely lady—but she can’t even pretend to manage him. The boy’s on his

way to Europe to finish his education.”

“Ha! His education hasn’t *begun* yet,” another man growled. “That boy gets two hundred a month just for pocket money.”

“His father owns railroads, ain’t that right?” the German grunted.

“Yep. And mines and lumber mills and shipping. Owns a couple of houses, too,” the New Yorker said. “Too busy, I guess, to bother with his son. He’ll find out his error a few years from now. It’s a pity—because there’s a heap of good in the boy.”

Once more the door banged open, and Harvey Cheyne entered. His complexion was pasty yellow, and a half-smoked cigarette hung from one corner of his mouth. About 15 years old, he wore a cherry-colored blazer, knee pants, bicycle shoes, and a red cap.

“The fog is sure thick out there,” he said in a loud, high voice. “You can hear the fishing boats all around us. Say, wouldn’t it be great if we ran one down?”

The New Yorker sighed. “Shut the door, Harvey,” he said. “Shut it and stay outside.”

“Who’ll make me?” Harvey asked. “Did

you buy my ticket?" He picked up some dice from a checkerboard and began tossing them from one hand to another. "Say, how about a game of poker, gentlemen?"

Getting no answer, he pulled out a roll of bills as if to count them. "Pff!" he went on. "My cigarette's out. Any of you gentlemen got a good cigarette?"

The German opened his cigar case. He handed a skinny black cigar to Harvey. "This is the proper thing to smoke, my young friend—if you're up to it," he said.

Harvey lit the thing. "It'd take more than this to knock me out," he said.

"That we shall see," said the German.

Then the chief engineer entered, and the German turned to him. "Where are we now, Mr. Maconal?" he asked.

"We'll be on the Grand Bank tonight," the engineer replied. "But already there's fishing dories everywhere. Three of them have scraped up against us since noon."

The German turned back to Harvey. The boy's eyes were red and wet. "You like my cigar, eh?" he asked.

“Fine, full flavor,” Harvey croaked. “I think I’ll go outside for a bit of air now.”

“I might if I were you,” the German said.

Harvey was glad no one saw him as he staggered across the deck. He fell to his knees and crawled to the flagpole. There he lay, doubled up in agony. The bitter taste of the cigar coated his throat. His head swelled, and sparks of fire danced before his eyes. He was fainting from seasickness.

Then a giant wave rose up and washed him off the deck! Harvey lost consciousness in the cold green water.

He woke to the sound of a horn. Slowly, he remembered that he was Harvey Cheyne, the boy who’d drowned in the ocean. Clammy chills went down his back.

He opened his eyes and found he was lying on a pile of half-dead fish. He groaned. A man with a broad back, wearing a blue sweater, turned to look at him.

The man had curly black hair and gold earrings. “Good job I catch you,” he said. “Even better, your big ship not catch *me*! Just in time I blow my horn. Your ship, she turn a



little and I see you come over the side. How come you fall out?”

“I was sick,” Harvey tried to explain, “and I couldn’t help it.”

The man’s eyes twinkled merrily. “I make a big fish of you and catch you! So you shall not die this time,” he said.

“Where am I?” Harvey asked weakly.

“You are with me in the dory. Manuel, my name. I come on the schooner *We’re Here*, from the town of Gloucester. By and by we get supper. Eh wha-at?”

Harvey lay very still. He was terrified at the size of the rolling waves around him. The little boat would lift up 20 feet before sliding down a green mountain of water.

At the sound of another horn, shouts came through the fog. Then the dory was next to a larger boat. Several voices spoke at once. Men in oilskins gave Harvey a hot drink and removed his wet clothes. He slept.

Harvey woke in a room that was like a cave, low and dark. At one end, behind an old stove, a boy about his age looked at him. He had a flat red face and clear gray eyes. He wore a blue sweater and rubber boots. Several pairs of boots lay on the floor, along with worn, wool socks. Yellow oilskins swayed back and forth beside bunk beds. The air smelled of oilskins, fried fish, burnt grease, paint, pepper, and tobacco. Harvey noticed with disgust there were no sheets on his bed. He lay on a dingy mattress, full of lumps and nubbles. Water noises ran close to his ear. The beams creaked and whined around him.

The boy grinned. "Feeling better, are you?" he asked. "Here you go—have yourself some

hot coffee.” He handed Harvey a tin cup.

“Isn’t there any milk?” Harvey asked.

“Well, no,” the boy laughed. “Not likely to be any milk until about September. Try the coffee. It ain’t bad. I made it myself.”

Harvey drank in silence. Then the boy handed him a plate of crisply fried pork. Harvey ate ravenously.

“I dried your clothes,” the boy said. “Guess they’ve shrunk some. Fix yourself and go on deck. Dad wants to see you. I’m his son—Dan. I’m the cook’s helper, and I do everything else around here that’s too dirty for the men. There ain’t no other boys here. Not since Otto fell overboard, and he was older. Hurry now! Dad’s waiting.”

Never in his life had Harvey been given a direct order. His mother had been afraid of breaking his spirit.

“Your dad can come here if he’s so anxious to see me,” Harvey said. “I want him to take me to New York right away. I’ll pay him.”

Dan thought he was joking. He opened his eyes wide and shouted up the hatch, “Hey, Dad! This boy says you can come down here

if you want to see him. Hear that, Dad?"

The deepest voice Harvey had ever heard called out, "You quit fooling, Dan, and send him to me."

Dan sniggered, and threw Harvey his bicycle shoes. When Harvey climbed up a ladder to the deck, he saw a small, thick-set man with gray eyebrows.

"Good morning," the man said. "Or good afternoon, I should say. You've about slept around the clock, young feller. Now, let's hear all about it. It's very good luck for you that we were there to fish you out of the water last night."

Harvey gave his name, the name of the ocean liner, and a short account of the accident. Then he said he needed to be taken to New York immediately. His father would pay the man whatever he asked.

"Hmm," the man said. "I'm afraid we don't think special of any man or boy that falls overboard in a dead calm sea. Especially when his excuse is being seasick."

"*Excuse!*" Harvey yelped. "Do you think I'd fall into your dirty little boat for fun?"

"If I was you," the man said, "I wouldn't be calling this boat names. Especially since it was the means of saving you. This schooner is the *We're Here*. My name is Disko Troop, which you don't seem to know."

"I don't know and I don't care," Harvey grumbled. "I'm grateful for being saved and all that, of course! But the sooner you get me to New York, the better it'll pay you."

"Meaning how?" Disko asked, dryly.

"Dollars and cents," Harvey said. "I'm Harvey Cheyne's son. And if you don't know who Harvey Cheyne is, you really don't know very much. Now turn her around."

"I'm real sorry I ain't heard of your pa," said Disko. "When we get back in September, I'd be surprised if he gave me ten dollars, after all your talk."

"*Ten dollars!* Why, see here—" Harvey dived into his pocket for his wad of bills. All he brought up was a soggy pack of cigarettes.

"It's been stolen!" Harvey said hotly. He hunted wildly through all his pockets. "A hundred and thirty-four dollars! You'd better give them back."

A change flitted over Disko's hard face. "And what might a boy your age be doing with that amount of money?"

"It's part of my pocket money—for the month," Harvey said.

Clearly, Disko didn't believe him. "Oh!" he said. "You don't remember hitting your head when you fell over, do you?"

Harvey nearly choked with rage.

"We're very sorry for you," Disko went on, "being so young and all. So we won't say no more about the money, I guess."

Harvey made a rude face. "Of course you won't—because you stole it," he snarled.

"Suit yourself," Disko said with a shrug. "Now, about going back—we can't. We've just come onto the Grand Banks. We'll be fishing here all season. In a whole *month*, we don't see half of a hundred dollars! With good luck, we'll be back on shore in Gloucester sometime come September."

"But it's only May now!" Harvey howled. "I can't just stay here doing nothing."

"Right and just," Disko agreed. "There's a heap you *can* do, since we've lost Otto. Seems

he lost his grip in a storm. Anyway, it's good luck you turned up."

Harvey's eyes opened wide. "Do you mean I'm supposed to clean pots and pans and things?" he gasped.

Disko nodded. "And other things, too. I'll give you ten and a half dollars a month, though you ain't worth it."

"I *won't!*" Harvey shrieked. "My father will give you enough to buy this dirty little fish kettle. And you owe me one hundred and thirty-four dollars anyway."

Dan walked up beside Harvey. "Now don't be fooling with Dad anymore," he pleaded. "You've called him a thief two times over. He won't take that from any living being."

"I'll say what I please!" Harvey shouted. "Take me back to New York, or I'll—"

Next thing Harvey knew, he was flat on his back, holding onto his bloody nose.

Disko said, "Be gentle with him, Dan. Or I'll give you twice what I gave him."

Then he walked quietly to his cabin. Dan was left to comfort the unlucky heir to a fortune of 30 million dollars.

S2

A Change of Heart

Harvey's shoulders shook with dry sobs.

"I warned ye, didn't I?" Dan told him. "Dad ain't a hasty man, but you earned it. What in creation made you call him a thief? He's my *dad!*"

Harvey mopped his nose and told Dan the story of the missing bills. "I'm not crazy," he said. "Only—your father has never seen more than one five-dollar bill at a time. And *my* father could buy a boat like this every week and never miss the money."

Dan whistled. "Your dad must have a *pile* of money!" he said. "How did he get it?"

"In gold mines and things," Harvey said. "Out west, you know. He's what they call a multimillionaire. And he has two private railcars. One is named for me, the *Harvey*, and the other one for my mother, the *Constance*."

“Hold on,” Dan said. “Dad don’t ever let me swear, but I guess *you* can. I want you to say you hope to die if you’re lying.”

“All right then. I hope to die right here,” Harvey said solemnly, “if every word I’ve spoken isn’t the cold truth.”

After 10 more minutes of questions, Dan believed that Harvey wasn’t lying—much. “I believe you, Harvey,” he said. “Looks like for once in his life, Dad’s made a mistake.”

“You admit I was right?” Harvey asked.

“No, you were *wrong!*” Dan insisted. “The wrongest kind of wrong. You pitch in and work right along with me now, or you’ll catch it. And *I’ll* catch it for backing you up. Guess you’re still kind of mad at Dad. But Dad’s a mighty just man—everybody says so.”

“Ha! Does *this* look like justice?” Harvey complained, pointing to his nose.

“Oh, that’s nothing,” Dan laughed. “Dad did it for your health. But, say—I can’t deal with a feller who thinks Dad’s a thief. Neither Dad nor me saw *anything* of that money you keep talking about. That’s *my* say.”

The bloody nose had cleared Harvey’s

brain. And maybe the loneliness of the sea also had something to do with the boy's change of heart.

"I guess I haven't been very grateful," Harvey admitted. "After all, you saved me from drowning. I must have lost my money in the water."

"Well, you was all shook up then—and mighty wet, too," Dan chuckled.

"Where's your father?" Harvey asked.

A minute later, Harvey stepped into the skipper's cabin. "I—I'm here to take things back," he mumbled. "I'm sorry."

Disko shook Harvey's hand hard, making his arm numb to the elbow. "I don't think any worse of ye for what's gone by," Disko said. "You go right about your business now, boy, and you won't take any hurt."

Harvey went back on deck. Dan, who was looking out to sea, said, "See, they're coming in now."

Harvey looked out and saw six dories rowing toward the *We're Here*.

Dan pointed out the fishermen bringing back the day's catch to the *We're Here*. "That's

Manuel, the Portugee, with his boat riding low," he said. "He ain't got room for even one more fish! And there's Long Jack, the feller with the humpy shoulders. The man singing is Tom Platt, who was in the navy. And there's Dad's own brother, my Uncle Salters."

Then Dan turned to Harvey and studied his face. "Say, is it true that you've never done a turn of work in all your born life? That must feel kind of awful, don't it?"

"I'm going to try to work," Harvey said. "Only it's all brand new."

"Grab hold of that tackle then!" Dan said.

Harvey grabbed a rope and a long iron hook. Dan grabbed another as a dory pulled alongside the *We're Here*. Then Manuel began to shovel fish from his dory up into a deep pen on the deck. "Two hundred and thirty-one!" he shouted as he finished his task.

"Now give Manuel the rope and hook," Dan told Harvey.

Manuel fixed one hook at the dory's stern, and one at the bow. Then he climbed into the *We're Here*.

"Now pull!" Dan shouted.

When Harvey pulled the rope, he was surprised to see how easily the lightweight dory rose in the air.

"Lower away," Dan shouted. As Harvey lowered the rope, Dan gently moved the dory onto the deck.

"Ah ha!" Manuel shouted with a brilliant smile. He held out a strong, brown hand to Harvey. "This time last night we fish for you! Now you fish for fish. Eh, wha-at?"

Harvey felt embarrassed. "I—I'm ever so grateful," he stammered.

"There's no need to be thankful to *me*!" Manuel said. "Danny, I was too busy to clean the boat today. Clean it for me, my son."

Harvey moved forward at once. When Dan threw him a swab, he began to mop the slimy bottom clumsily, but with great good will.

One by one, the rest of the men came alongside. There was Long Jack, an Irishman with a grizzly chin. Next came Tom Platt, who had a purple scar running from his left eye to the corner of his mouth. Last of all came Uncle Salters, a fat, tubby little man. Penn, a small, meek fellow, was with him.

He'd caught 42 or 45 fish. He wasn't sure, so he set to work counting them over again.

A voice called out, "Seat ye! Seat ye!" At that, Disko, Tom Platt, Long Jack, and Salters went to the galley for supper. The elder men ate first. There wasn't room at the table for everyone to sit down at once.

The moon was up before the elders were finished. Then Harvey went to the table with Penn, Dan, and Manuel. Supper was bits of cod and pork with fried potato. There was a loaf of hot bread, and strong, black coffee.

The cook was a huge black man who did not speak. "Can't he talk?" Harvey asked Dan in a whisper.

"Enough to get along," Dan replied. The cook was from Cape Breton. His language was Gaelic, which nobody else understood.

After supper it was dressing-down time. The crew went up to the deck. In the bright moonlight the fish in the pen looked like a pile of fluid silver.

Dan passed Harvey a pitchfork. "You pitch to Dad and Tom Platt," he said.

Manuel, Long Jack, and Uncle Salters

stood at a long table. The work began.

"Hi!" shouted Manuel as he picked up a cod and slit it open with a knife.

"Hi!" Long Jack cried out. With a scoop of his finger, the cod's liver dropped into a basket. Another pull and the guts and head went flying. Then the fish was slid over to Uncle Salters, who removed the backbone. Then another fish was passed from man to man. Soon the fish were moving along the table very quickly. It was as if they were alive! At the end of the line, they were dropped into a tub at Harvey's feet.

When Harvey's tub was full of cod, he dumped them into the hold. There Disko, Dan, and Tom Platt packed the fish in salt so they wouldn't spoil.

After an hour, Harvey's back ached. He would have given anything to rest. But, for the first time in his life, he was part of a working gang of men. That strange thought gave him pride.

The work went on without stopping until the fish pen was empty. After the last fish was salted, the men went to bed.

“The boys—that’s us, Harvey—clean up,” Dan said. “Then we’re the first watch.”

“Watch!” Harvey groaned. “Pshaw! What’s to watch out *for*? Nothing’s going to hurt us. With all this moonlight, it’s bright as day.”

“Dad says that’s just when things happen,” Dan said with a shrug. “Before you know it, you’re cut in two by an ocean liner. I’ve kind of taken to you, Harve—but you’ve got to stay awake! If you nod off, I’ll lay into you with the end of a rope.”

Harvey argued, whimpered, and finally cried. Between yawns, Dan lashed out with the rope. He hit the dories as often as he hit Harvey. At ten o’clock, when little Penn came on watch, both boys were deeply asleep.

S

3

Learning the Ropes

The next day was mild and clear. The boys did their chores. They cleaned up the breakfast dishes, sliced pork for the midday meal, fetched coal and water for the cook, filled the lamps with oil, and cleaned the deck.

Then Dan asked his father, "Can't we go out a bit? It's good catching weather."

When Disko agreed, Dan gave Harvey a set of his own clothes. "You can't go out in that cherry-colored outfit," Disko said.

Dan's little red dory, the *Hattie S.*, was spotlessly clean. Harvey started to row in a ladylike way. His hands blistered quickly. When they stopped, Harvey struggled to bait his line. Dan quickly caught a big cod.

Rocking in the dory, Harvey remembered how his mother worried whenever he went out on a lake. He remembered how he'd

laughed at her. Suddenly, his line flashed through his hand, stinging his fingers.

“Give him room,” Dan said. “I’ll help ye.”

“No!” Harvey snapped. “It’s my first fish. I’ll catch it myself. Is—is it a whale?”

“Might be a halibut. I’ll bet my wages it’s over a hundred pounds,” Dan said excitedly.

For the next 20 minutes, the fish took charge of the dory. Harvey’s hands were now raw and bleeding. But the big, flat fish was finally gaffed and hauled in.

“Beginner’s luck,” Dan said.

Harvey gazed at the huge gray fish with unspeakable pride. He’d seen a piece of halibut on a dinner plate many times before. But he’d never thought at all about how it got there. Now he knew—and every inch of his body ached.

“If Dad was along, he’d say that halibut was a sign,” Dan said. “Before now, the catch has been running smaller and smaller.”

Just then the boys heard someone firing a pistol from the deck of the schooner.

“What’d I tell you?” Dan said. “That’s the call for everyone to stop and come in. Dad must be up to something.”

They headed back to the *We're Here*. On the way, they spotted Penn. His dory was circling around and around like a giant water bug.

"Huh! His anchor's stuck," Dan said.

He rowed over to help Penn loosen the anchor. Harvey couldn't help noticing that when Penn thanked him, his pale blue eyes seemed big and pathetic-looking.

When the boys were out of Penn's earshot, Dan said, "Hate to say it, but Penn ain't all there, Harve. He ain't at all dangerous—but his mind's gone.

"Penn was a preacher once," Dan went on. "In those days he lived with his wife and children in Pennsylvania. He was called Jacob Boller then. Well, he took his family to a camp meeting one night—up in Johnstown. A dam busted that night and flooded the whole place! Houses floated and bumped into each other and sank. I've seen the pictures with my own eyes. Penn saw all his family drowned. His mind gave out right then. After that, he just drifted around.

"Uncle Salters found him. Back then my uncle was a farmer. After what happened, he

kind of adopted Penn. From then on they worked the farm together.

“Later on, Uncle Salters sold the farm and went to work with Dad. He took Penn with him, and it’s done him a lot of good. Don’t ye talk about Johnstown to Penn. Or to Uncle Salters, either. He’ll heave ye overboard.”

“Poor Penn!” Harvey murmured.

Back at the *We’re Here*, Disko said to leave the dories in the water for a while. He wanted them to dress down the fish right away.

Dan winked at Harvey. “What’d I tell you? Dad’s got *plans*. Look at all the boats that’ve come around since morning. They want to see what Dad is up to. See, Harve?”

Harvey looked around. Sure enough, the water was crowded with fishing schooners.

“It’s too crowded here,” Disko said as the crew climbed on board. “We’ll leave tonight. The weather’s changing.”

Half an hour later, the fog dropped in. Without a word, the men stopped working. In minutes the anchor was pulled, and the crew got ready to leave.

Harvey pitched in and helped. Disko told

him, "That's good, my son." To Harvey, those were wonderful words.

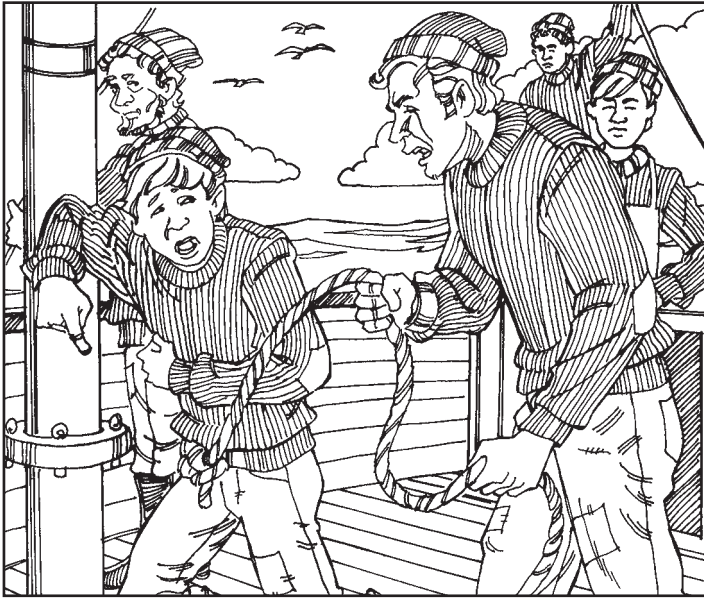
There was nothing much to do for a while. Long Jack and Tom Platt decided to teach Harvey all about the *We're Here*. They showed the boy every sail and cable and rope. After a long lesson, Tom Platt would name a particular rope. Then Harvey was supposed to put his hand on it. But the boy was tired by now, and he walked slowly.

Suddenly, Tom Platt lashed Harvey's ribs with a rope's end. The sharp blow nearly knocked the breath out of him.

"When you own your own boat, you can walk," Tom Platt said. "Right now you take your orders at a run!"

Harvey looked around at the other men. Not even Dan was smiling. Though his ribs ached, he swallowed the pain with a gulp.

Harvey was very smart. He was the son of a clever man and a sensitive woman. He'd been smart enough to take advantage of his mother. And that same smartness told him that no one on this boat would stand for nonsense (except maybe Penn). For the rest of



the lesson, Harvey moved with speed.

“You done very good,” Manuel said, when Harvey’s lesson was over for the day.

The *We’re Here* moved to new waters. The boys began to fish from the side of the boat. Very soon, Dan’s line twitched. “Help us, here, Harve. It’s a big one.” Hauling on the line together, they landed a 20-pound cod.

Then Harvey landed another cod.

“What’d I tell you? Dad *knew*,” Dan said proudly. “The fish here are so hungry, they’d bite a bare hook!”

“Say, this is great,” Harvey said, as a fish came in, gasping and splashing. “Why can’t we always fish from the boat instead of from the dories?”

“We always can—until we dress down,” Dan explained. “After that the heads and guts in the water would scare the fish. Fishing from up here is a lot harder on the back, though.”

It *was* rather back-breaking work. But when the fish stopped biting, the boys had a big pile of cod on the deck.

When the fish were cleaned, the guts were set aside. Then the boys used pieces of gut to bait long trawl lines. These long lines would be dragged behind the dories. Along the way the cod would bite at the moving bait.

There was a big hook between every few feet of line. Dan baited each hook quickly and easily, without even looking. But Harvey caught his fingers on the hooks’ barbs again and again.

As darkness fell, Long Jack and Tom Platt went off in a dory, dragging baited lines. To Harvey, the dory looked overloaded, and the sea very rough. His job was to keep ringing a

bell so the dory could find the *We're Here* in the dark. Harvey rang lustily, for he felt that two lives depended on him.

Finally, there was a bump at the side of the *We're Here*. The dory had returned! Long Jack and Tom Platt climbed on board, sloshing water and joking. Then they all rolled off to supper. Harvey stuffed himself with fish chowder and fried pies. Afterwards, he fell asleep almost immediately. Penn pushed the boy's slumped body into his bunk.

"It must be sad for his mother and father," Penn said as he watched Harvey's face. "They must think their boy is dead. To lose a child—how awful to lose a manchild!"

"Go on now, Penn," Dan said. "You've got a game of checkers going with Uncle Salters. Tell Dad I'll take Harvey's watch."

Manuel was slipping out of his boots. "Harvey's a very good boy," he said. "I think he make a good man. I don't think he so crazy as your papa says, Danny. Eh, wha-at?"

Dan chuckled. Before he knew it, though, his chuckle turned into a snore.

S

4

Disaster at Sea

Harvey woke up to find the *We're Here* in rough water. The boat would tip up steeply, then swoop down. Again and again water from the surging waves slammed down on the deck like buckshot. In the tiny galley, the cook balanced himself over the stove. The pots and pans rattled and shook.

"There's no chores to do in this weather," Long Jack said. After breakfast, he went back to his bunk and smoked.

The crew passed the time with stories and songs. Dan played the accordion. Tom Platt brought out an old, white fiddle. Manuel played a tiny, guitar-like thing he called a *machette*.

Dan started up a lively tune: *It's six and twenty Sundays since last we saw the land . . .*

"Hold on!" roared Tom Platt. "That song's a Jonah. Do you want to nail the trip?"

“What’s a Jonah?” Harvey asked.

“A Jonah’s something that spoils the luck,” Tom Platt said. “There’s all sorts of Jonahs. One time there was a green dory on the *Ezra Flood*. That one was the worst sort of Jonah. Drowned four men, that dory.”

Harvey was surprised by the man’s superstition. “And you really believe that?” he asked. “Don’t we all have to take what’s coming to us?”

“Huh! Things can happen,” Disko said. “Don’t you go mocking Jonahs, young feller.”

“Well, Harve ain’t no Jonah,” Dan chipped in. “Why, the day after we fished him out of the water, we had a good catch.”

Suddenly, the cook threw back his head and roared. It was a queer, thin laugh.

“Don’t do that again,” Long Jack said. “We ain’t used to it.”

“What’s wrong?” Dan asked. “Ain’t Harve our mascot? And didn’t we have a fine catch after we found him?”

“Oh, yes,” said the previously silent cook. “But catch not finished yet.”

“What are you hinting at?” Dan said hotly.

"There's nothing wrong with the boy. *Harve's* all right. He ain't going to do us any harm."

"No, no," said the cook. "But one day he be your master, Danny."

"Ha! He *won't*," Dan retorted.

"Master!" the cook repeated, pointing to Harvey. "Man!" And he pointed at Dan.

"That's news. And just how soon is that supposed to happen?" Dan asked with a laugh.

"Some years," the big cook said with conviction. "In my time—I will be there."

"How in thunder do ye work that out?" Tom Platt wanted to know.

"I *see* it—in my head," the cook said with a confident nod.

"How?" asked the others.

The cook shrugged. "I do not know. But it will be so," he said. Silent again, he calmly went back to peeling potatoes. After that, they couldn't get another word out of him.

After the fog cleared, the crew went on deck to get some fresh air. The *We're Here* zigzagged up and down the slopes of water. The wind hooted in her rigging.

"I think I see something flickering over

there,” Uncle Salters said. He pointed to the northeast.

In spite of his big boots, Dan quickly scaled the rigging. “It’s a schooner,” he yelled.

“It’s Uncle Abishai,” Salters exclaimed.

“Oh, no! The king of all the Jonahs,” Tom Platt groaned.

They could see that the bedraggled boat was a wreck. Her rigging was knotted and tangled like a weed. Her jib-boom was barely held together with nails and clamps.

Long Jack shook his head. “That boat won’t hold together in this kind of weather.”

“Ain’t she lower in the water than she should be, Tom Platt?” Disko asked.

“She ain’t safe,” Tom Platt agreed. “Abishai better pump her out, quick.”

As the boat drew closer, a gray-bearded man appeared. In a low voice he called out something that Harvey couldn’t understand.

Disko’s face darkened. He waved his arm up and down, gesturing the motion of a man at the pumps. Abishai’s whole crew mocked him and laughed.

“It’s a gale coming, a living gale!” Uncle

Abishai yelled. "You won't make it back home, you haddocks!"

Tom Platt was disgusted. "Crazy, as usual," he growled. "I wish he hadn't seen us."

As Abishai's boat drifted away, Harvey shuddered. He'd had a good, long look at the savage-eyed crew.

"That boat's a floating blight," Long Jack said. "I wonder what mischief he's been up to on shore."

Dan turned to Harvey. "Abishai never goes home," he said. "He just drifts around. He's always in debt. Mostly he fishes up near the Newfoundland beaches. Dad won't ever take me on shore there. It's a mighty tough crowd, and Abishai's the toughest. He's been a Jonah for years and years."

They watched as Abishai's boat went down the wind. Suddenly the cook cried out in his strange, high voice: "He is doomed—*doomed*, I tell you! Look!"

The boat sailed into a patch of sunshine three or four miles away. Then the patch went dull and slowly faded out. Even as the light passed, so did the boat itself. She dropped

into a wave and—went straight down!

“She’s gone under!” Disko shouted. “We’ve got to help them. Break her out! Quick!”

The two men jerked the anchor up from the bottom. The boat lurched so suddenly that Harvey fell flat onto the deck.

The *We’re Here* reached the spot where Abishai’s boat had disappeared. They saw three or four tubs, which were used to hold trawl lines. There was also a gin bottle and a wrecked dory. That was all.

“Guess they never thought of pumping her,” Disko said sadly. “That’s one more boat lost because the crew was drunk.”

“Doomed! *Doomed!*” the cook cried out, rolling his eyes wildly. “He has taken his own luck with him.”

All those men—gone. Penn sat down and sobbed at the sheer horror and pity of it all.

Harvey felt very sick. All Disko said to him was, “When we die on the sea, we die mighty quick. You think on that for a while, young feller. It was liquor that killed that crew.”

5 **Days of Fish and Fog**

In their many talks, Harvey learned a great deal about Hattie, the girl Dan had named his dory after. She lived back home in Gloucester. At 14, Hattie had a strong contempt for boys. She'd been trampling on Dan's heart all winter.

Dan told Harvey all this while they were on watch. Harvey had sworn to keep it a secret.

Once the boys got into a fight about something. The tussle raged from the front of the boat to the back. Finally, Penn came up and separated them. He promised not to tell Disko—who thought fighting on watch was worse than sleeping. No match for Dan's strength, Harvey was the loser. But he didn't try to get even, which says a great deal about his new training.

Since Harvey was a boy, and very busy, he did more feeling than thinking. He felt

terribly sorry for his mother. He longed to see her and tell her how well he was doing. By now she must be certain that he was dead.

Harvey had truly become a part of the *We're Here*. He had his place at the table. And he could hold his own in long talks on stormy days. The others were always eager to hear him tell about his life on shore. They called his stories "Harvey's fairy tales."

It had taken Harvey a couple of days to realize that no one except Dan believed them. (And even Dan found them hard to believe.) So Harvey invented a friend—an imaginary boy to substitute for himself. This boy drove a four-pony cart. He ordered five suits of clothes at a time and gave people presents made of solid silver.

Everyone listened eagerly to Harvey's tales. And they told him what they thought of his "friend." Long Jack had several names for the "friend," including "the Crazy Kid," "the Gilt-Edged Baby," and "the Suckin' Vanderpoop."

Little by little, Harvey changed his tone when speaking of his "friend." He began to have a different view of fine clothes, fancy

dinner parties, perfume, and gold watches and rings. His old life seemed very far away.

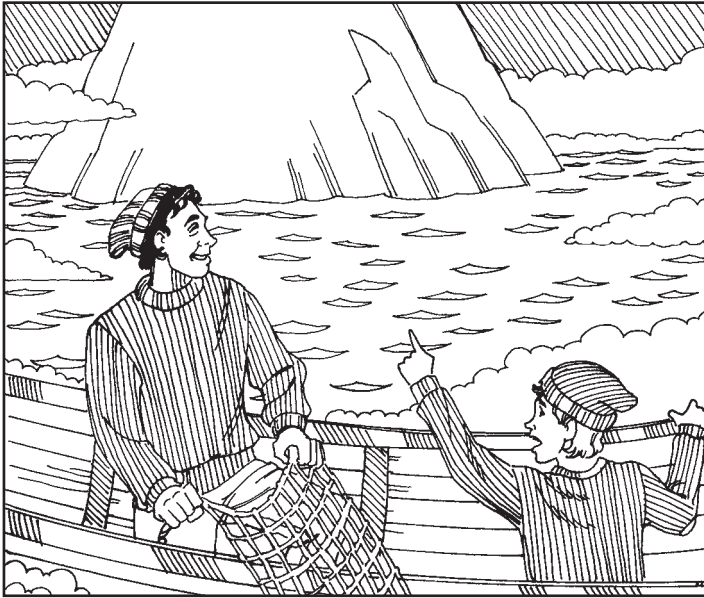
Before long, Harvey discovered Disko's quadrant. This was the instrument the skipper used to find the boat's position at sea. Once Disko calculated the position, Harvey used a nail to scratch the position and the date on the stovepipe.

For days, they worked in the fog. Harvey went out in Tom Platt's dory. The fog was so thick, he could see almost nothing beyond the boat. It made him fearful. But the fog didn't lift. And no one can stay paralyzed by fear for six hours at a time. So he stayed busy helping Tom Platt with the trawl lines. Finally they rowed back, guided by the bell. That night, Harvey dreamed of the foggy blanket of air that melted into the sea.

A few days later Harvey was out with Manuel. When the anchor couldn't touch bottom, Harvey grew terribly afraid. Their last touch with earth was lost!

"It's just a whale-hole," Manuel said as he hauled in the line.

Soon after they rowed back to the



schooner, the *We're Here* moved on to more shallow waters. Again, Harvey went out with Manuel. And this time something happened that made the hair on his head stand up.

Through the fog he saw a great white shape, whiter than the fog. At the same time, he felt a puff of cold air, like a breath from the grave. It was one of the dreaded icebergs he'd heard about! Harvey cowered at the bottom of the boat, while Manuel laughed.

Most of the time, however, the weather was clear and soft and warm. On these days

Harvey was taught how to steer the boat.

He was thrilled to hold the wheel in his hands. How wonderful it was to feel the boat answering to his moves! As usual, however, pride came before a fall.

One day, Harvey was showing Dan what an expert he had become. When he jammed the wheel to the right, one of the sails went over with a bang and ripped as it fell! Dan hooted with joy as Harvey spent the next few days sewing up the rip. Dan didn't mention that he'd made the same blunder himself just a few years ago.

Like any boy, Harvey imitated the men around him. He copied Disko's stoop as he stood at the wheel. He copied Long Jack's way of hauling in the lines. He imitated Manuel's manner of rowing and Tom Platt's long stride.

"It's beautiful to see how Harvey takes to it," Long Jack said one day. "I'll bet my wage it's more than half play-acting to him."

"Isn't that the way we all begin?" Tom Platt asked. "Boys make believe all the time—until they've cheated themselves into being men." Then he called down to the cabin, "Guess you

were mistaken for once, Disko. What made you think the kid was crazy?”

“He *was*!” Disko yelled back. “Crazy as a loon when he first come on board. But he’s sobered up since. I cured him.”

“And the boy tells a good story,” Tom Platt went on. “The other night he told us about a kid who had a rig and four ponies. Curious kind of fairy tale—but it was interesting.”

“Guess he gets those stories from his own head,” Disko remarked. “No one believes him but Dan. And even Dan laughs at him.”

Penn, though, believed that Harvey was a lunatic. He also pitied him—for he was a lost child. Penn was very gentle with the boy.

Salters relaxed when he saw that Penn liked Harvey. He himself was always stern with the boys. He saw it as his job to keep them in order. But Harvey didn’t fear him. One day, as a joke, Harvey climbed up and dangled Salters’ boots from the main mast!

With Disko, though, Harvey took no liberties. He obeyed every order exactly.

Disko showed Harvey the map of the waters they fished. He taught him how to

locate the boat's position. In time, Disko discovered that Harvey had been born with a natural head for figures. He was even better than Dan at using the chart and quadrant.

But in other matters, Dan was Harvey's master. Having been at sea for so long, Dan could lay his hand on any rope in the dark. He could dress down fish by touch alone. And he could steer the schooner in all kinds of weather except a gale.

The cook kept to his prophecy that Harvey would be Dan's master someday. At each meal, he would ask Harvey—and only Harvey—if he liked the food. The other men laughed. But, secretly, they had great respect for the cook's judgment. In their hearts, Harvey had become much like a mascot.

While Harvey was learning this new life, the *We're Here* continued to go about her business. Down in the hold, the silver-gray pile of salted fish grew higher and higher. The busy days passed quickly.

S6

A Near Collision

Disko was widely admired for his skill at finding good fishing grounds. So other boats watched him closely. But Disko also had a knack for slipping away from them in the fog.

The skipper had two reasons for avoiding company. The first was that he preferred to make his own experiments. Secondly, he didn't like crowded water. The more boats nearby, the more chances for accidents. Not to mention that greed could make a crew take foolish risks.

The *We're Here* headed off alone to a place called "the Shoals." This was the turning point of the season's journey. With good luck, they would catch the rest of their fish here.

Harvey had seen the Shoals on the map. It was one tiny dot. He wondered how even Disko could find it. Later, he learned that

Disko could find *anything*. He could even help lost ships find their way. Harvey had noticed a big four-by-five-foot blackboard hanging in the cabin. He hadn't understood what it was for until the day they heard the hooting of a foghorn.

A boat glided out of the fog. "She's calling for her latitude," Long Jack said.

"It's a French boat," Uncle Salters reported.

"Bring up the blackboard, Danny," the skipper ordered. When Disko called out some numbers, Dan wrote the latitude and longitude on the blackboard. Then he held it up so the French crew could see it.

"*Merci! Merci!*" the crew shouted.

"Seems kind of unneighborly to let them go off like this," Salters said in a grumpy voice. "I'm almost out of tobacco, Disko."

"Same here," Tom Platt chimed in.

At Disko's nod, they shouted at the French crew, "*Tabac! Tabac!*"

"*Ah, tabac, tabac!*" some of the French fishermen shouted back.

Harvey, who spoke French, rowed over to their boat with Tom Platt.

The French fishermen asked for chocolate and crackers in exchange. So Harvey and Platt went back to the *We're Here* for the food. The trade made, Tom Platt came away with several cakes of smoking and chewing tobacco.

The Frenchmen sailed away, singing gaily.

Soon after, Disko was asked for help once again. This time the boat was a big steamer hauling cattle. The lumbering old vessel smelled like a thousand cattle pens! A very excited officer yelled at them for the latitude and longitude. Instead, Disko gave him a piece of his mind.

"You're asking where you are?" Disko demanded. "You don't deserve to be anywhere! You barnyard tramps go hogging the road on the high seas. You've no consideration for your neighbors. Your eyes are in your coffee cups instead of in your heads."

They traded insults until Disko gave them the latitude and longitude. But he was still grumbling about the steamer going around the water "like a lost child."

It was that night, after supper, that Disko told them how he'd got his name. His father

had been fishing around Greenland then.

“He took my mother along with him,” Disko said, “to show her how the money was earned, I suppose. But there was so much ice in the water, they had to stop a while in Greenland. I was born at a settlement called Disko. I don’t remember nothing about it, of course. We came back home in the spring, when the ice broke up. But they named me for the place. Kind of a mean trick to do to a baby! But I suppose we’re all bound to make some mistakes in our lives.”

The *We’re Here* traveled north and east. The dories went out to fish almost every day.

Along the east edge of the Grand Banks, Harvey met the squid—one of the best baits for cod. It was a black night when Salters woke everyone with cries of “Squid-O!” The men leaped from their bunks to put out squid jigs. These were red-painted pieces of lead. At the lower end of each lead was a circle of pins bent backward. The pins looked like the ribs of a half-opened umbrella. For some unknown reason, squid wrap themselves around the thing. When they do, they’re quickly

hauled on board before they can escape.

But as the squid are hauled up, they squirt out a stream of water and then ink. Of course, the men turned their heads from side to side to dodge the shot. Yet in spite of their efforts, their faces were black when it was over! But a valuable pile of squid lay on the deck. A large cod thinks very well of a shiny piece of squid at the end of a hook.

The next day many fish were caught. Another boat, the *Carrie Pitman*, came by. The crew of the *We're Here* shouted to them about their good luck.

The *Carrie Pitman* crew wanted to trade seven cod for one squid. But Disko wouldn't agree at that price, so the *Carrie Pitman's* crew sailed off sullenly. They dropped anchor half a mile away, hoping to find some squid for themselves.

The next day, there were even more boats around them. Then the fog came in, and the *We're Here* dropped anchor. There was not much fishing after that night.

A little before dawn, Dan and Harvey got up from their bunks. Just for fun, they were

hoping to steal fried pies from the cook. The cook would have gladly given the boys pies. But stealing made the cook mad—and stolen pies tasted better! Instead, they found Disko ringing the bell. He handed it over to Harvey.

“Keep it ringing,” Disko commanded. “I think I hear something.”

The bell made a sad little jingle. The thick, foggy air seemed to pinch off the sound. Between rings, Harvey could hear the shriek of an ocean liner’s siren. He knew enough of the Grand Banks to know what that meant.

A horribly clear memory suddenly came to Harvey. An ignorant, rowdy boy had once said it would be “great” if a liner ran down a fishing boat. That boy had a big room to himself with hot and cold running water. He often spent 10 minutes picking over a breakfast menu in the morning.

Now, that same boy—no, more like his much older brother—was up at four every morning. In the frigid darkness, wearing his oilskins, he was ringing a bell for dear life. Harvey thought of the people asleep in the liner’s comfortable rooms. If there was a

collision, they'd never know they'd massacred a boat before breakfast.

"When the liners come close to us," Dan said, "they only slow down one turn of their propeller. And that's just to keep inside the law. I'm sure that would be a great comfort to us when we're all at the bottom of the ocean! Oh, just listen to her!"

"*Aooo—whoooo—whupp!*" went the siren. "*Wingle—jingle—tink!*" went the bell. The sea and sky were mixed in a milky fog. Then Harvey sensed that he was close to a huge moving body. He looked up and saw the front of the liner. It rose up over the *We're Here* like a cliff! He could read a long line of numbers on the prow of the huge ship.

Then the numbers moved forward and disappeared. The *We're Here* staggered and shook. The back of the liner disappeared into the fog. Harvey felt he was about to faint—or be sick. Then he heard a *crack* like a trunk thrown onto a sidewalk. In the distance, a voice cried, "You've sunk us!"

"Are we hit?" Harvey gasped.

"No!" Dan shouted as he quickly hauled

out a dory. "There's a boat over there! Keep ringing! We're going out there to look!"

In half a minute, most of the crew were in dories. Only Harvey, Penn, and the cook stayed on board. The mast of a fishing boat, snapped clean across, floated by. An empty green dory bumped against the *We're Here*. Something face down was in the water. It was a man—but not all of him! Penn changed color and caught his breath. Harvey pounded at the bell. He was terrified that the rescuers might be sunk at any minute. He jumped when he heard Dan's shout.

"It's the *Jennie Cushman*!" Dan cried out hysterically. "She's cut clean in half—and ground up and trampled on! Dad's found Jason Olley. Everyone else is gone. His son is gone! Oh, Harve, Harve, I can't stand it! I've seen—" Then he dropped his head in his hands and sobbed. The others dragged a gray-headed man on board.

It was Jason Olley. "What did you pick me up for, Disko?" he groaned. "Why didn't you leave me there?"

Disko dropped a heavy hand on Jason's

shoulder, for the man's eyes were wild. The crew was silent. Then Penn spoke up—but it wasn't the Penn they knew. Suddenly, there was no trace of the fool. He now had the face of an old, wise man.

"I am a preacher," he said to Disko and the others. "Leave this man to me."

"Oh, are you?" Jason cried out. "Then pray my son back to me! Pray back my nine-thousand-dollar boat and my season's catch. If you'd let me die, my widow would never have known. Now, dear God, I'll have to tell her!"

"There ain't nothing to say," Disko said. "Better lie down a while, Jason Olley."

Jason Olley had lost his only son and his means of livelihood. And all in 30 seconds! It was hard for the men of the *We're Here* to give the cursed fellow any comfort.

"Come with me. Come below!" Penn insisted—as if he had a right to give orders. His eyes locked on Jason's. They were not Penn's eyes, but Jacob Boller's.

7 **Heading Home at Last**

Jason Olley was exhausted. "I don't know who you are, but I'll come along," he said submissively. Penn led him into the cabin and closed the door.

"That ain't Penn!" Uncle Salters cried out. "He's Jacob Boller the preacher again. And he's remembered Johnstown! I've never seen him look like that. What'll I do now?"

They could hear Penn and Jason talking. Then Penn's voice went on alone. Salters slipped off his hat, for Penn was praying. Soon, Penn came up the steps. His eyes were bright and there was sweat on his face.

"He doesn't know us," Salters groaned.

Penn spoke, as if he were speaking to strangers. "I prayed for the life of this man's son. My own children were drowned before my eyes. And my wife and—many others. I

have prayed for this man's son. We can be sure that his son shall be sent to him."

Salters looked pleadingly at Penn.

"How long have I been mad?" Penn asked suddenly. His mouth was twitching.

Disko's voice was shaking. "About five years," he said quietly.

"Then I have been a burden on someone every day," Penn said sadly.

"No! No!" Salters cried, twisting his hands together. "You've more than earned your way! And money is due you for value received."

A faint smile appeared on Penn's face. "You are good men. I see that in your faces, but—"

Long Jack was whispering, "He's clean bewitched!" just as they heard the bell of another boat. The *Carrie Pitman* was close by. A voice called out through the fog: "Disko! You heard about the *Jennie Cushman*?"

"They've found his son!" Penn cried.

"We've got Jason on board here," Disko said. "Did you find anyone else?"

"We've found one," the man from the *Carrie Pitman* shouted. "He was snarled up in a mess of broken boards. His head's cut some."

"Who is he?" asked Disko.

All hearts on the *We're Here* were beating fast.

"Looks like it's Jason's son," the voice yelled.

"How about you send Jason over here?"

Penn raised his hands as if in thanksgiving. Harvey could have sworn the bright sun was shining on his face.

Tom Platt rowed Jason to the *Carrie Pitman*. The fog closed over them.

"And now—" Penn began. He drew a deep breath as if he was about to preach. "And now—" His body sank. The light faded from his over-bright eyes, and his voice returned to its pitiful titter. "Do you think it's too early for a little game of checkers, Mr. Salters?"

"The very thing I was going to say myself," Salters assured him.

"Up anchor! Let's leave these crazy waters," Disko shouted to the crew. Never was he more quickly obeyed.

A little later, Long Jack asked, "What do you suppose was the meaning of all that?"

"Seems the *Jennie Cushman* business kind of pulled Penn out," Disko said. "For a while there, he was Jacob Boller again. Comforting

Jason Olley kind of propped him up. But, being weak, he let the props slip out from under him. So Penn went back down again. That's how I sense it."

Nodding all around, the whole crew decided that Disko was entirely correct.

Salters tiptoed up the stairs. Then he came right back, saying, "He's dead asleep."

Several hours later Penn appeared with a smooth face and a blank mind. He said he'd been dreaming. When he asked the others why they were so silent, they shook their heads and wouldn't tell him.

Disko worked the crew without mercy for the next few days. He kept them lively until they recovered their spirits. The *We're Here* moved blindly through the fog. Then, one morning Harvey was awakened by Disko's yell, "Hurry boys! We're in town!"

Harvey would never forget that sight. The sun was rising on nearly a hundred fishing boats! Dories were dropping away from every boat like bees from a crowded hive. A clamor of voices filled the air. The splash of oars was so loud it must have carried for miles.

That day, the water was full of tiny silver fish called caplin. The crews were trying to net as many as possible, for they were fine bait. As the huge schools of caplin made the sea fizz like soda water, the cod leapt after them. It was wonderful fishing—but the dories were so close together their fishing lines snarled. Harvey found himself in hot argument with two men at a time.

That night the pile of fish was huge. The men fell asleep during dressing-down.

The next day, the water was rich with cod. When they bit, they bit together. When they stopped biting, the crews amused themselves by trading friendly insults. Was there a careless cook? The men in the dories sang about him and his food. Had a man taken tobacco from one of his mates? The name was tossed from dory to dory. Every man was fair game for teasing, including Harvey's ladylike handling of the oars, Manuel's many girlfriends, and Dan's crush on his sweetheart.

That night, the weather was wild. The next morning brought angry whitecaps. Disko

kept the crew on the *We're Here*, dressing down fish. But some of the schooners sent dories off to fish.

The weather worsened that evening, and the *We're Here* crew rescued several men. As the boys stood on deck with lanterns, voices in the dark would call "Dory! Dory!" Then the boys would haul up a drenched man and a half-sunk dory. One violent wave threw a man onto the deck, cutting his forehead open. That morning seven extra mouths sat down to breakfast.

The next day, the crews shouted back and forth. Everyone felt better when boat after boat reported full crews. But two Portuguese and an old man from Gloucester had been lost. And one man from a French boat had died.

That night, Harvey watched through Disko's spy glass as an oblong bundle was slid into the water. He heard a slow, sad song from the man's boat. Someone said that a giant wave had smashed the poor Frenchman against the mast pole and broken his neck.

The next day there was an auction of the dead man's belongings. Dan and Harvey

rowed over on the *Hattie S.* Dan bought a knife with a curious brass handle.

"That's a fine knife. How come you got it so cheap?" Harvey asked.

"They're superstitious," Dan said. "They don't like taking iron off a dead man."

Harvey fancied the knife. "I'll give you a dollar for it when your dad pays my wages. Say, I'll give you two dollars," he offered.

"Do you like it as much as that?" Dan asked. "Well, to tell the truth, I kinda got it for *you*. I didn't let on 'til I saw how you'd taken to it. It's yours and welcome, Harve."

"But look here, Dan—" Harvey said.

"It ain't no use to me. Take it," Dan insisted. "I wish you to have it."

The temptation was irresistible. "I'll keep it as long as I live!" Harvey exclaimed.

"That's good to hear," Dan said with a laugh. "Hey! Looks as if you've got something on your line."

Harvey pulled. "It's caught on something, or my line is fouled," he said.

Dan gave the line a twang. "No, it could be a halibut. Better haul it up and be sure."

They took turns pulling on the line. The hidden weight slowly rose from the water.

“Haul!” Dan cried, but his shout ended in a shriek of terror. Out of the sea came the dead body of the Frenchman who’d been “buried” the day before. The hook had caught him under his right armpit. His head and shoulders swayed just under the surface. He had no face! The boys fell in a heap at the bottom of the dory. The body went on bobbing beside the boat.

“The tide. The tide must have carried him,” Harvey said. His lips quivered.

“Oh, Harve!” Dan groaned. “Maybe he’s come for his knife. Be quick!”

Harvey flung the dead man’s knife into the water. Then Dan slipped out his knife and cut the fishing line. The body shot down with a plop. Dan’s face was whiter than the fog. “Oh, Harve, did you see his—uh—head?”

“Did I? I’ll never forget it. But look here, Dan. He didn’t *really* come back for his knife. The tide brought him here.”

“The tide!” Dan cried out. “Why, they sunk him eight miles away. And they told me

they weighted him down with chain.”

“Wonder what he did with that knife up on the French coast,” Harvey said.

“Something bad, I guess,” Dan replied. “Say, what are you doing with the fish?”

“Heaving ’em overboard,” Harvey answered.

“What for? Hey, *we* won’t be eating them,” he objected.

“I don’t care. I had to look at him,” Harvey said. “You can keep your catch if you like.”

Dan said nothing. A minute later he threw his fish over the side, too.

The *We’re Here* seemed deliciously home-like when the boys returned. The light in the cabin made a comforting, warm glow. The satisfying smell of food filled the air. It also seemed heavenly to see Disko and the others, all alive and solid.

The next morning brought extra hard work. By now, the *We’re Here’s* hold was nearly full of cod. The same was true of the *Parry Norman*. The two were neck and neck to see who would finish the season first. After dressing-down, it seemed to Harvey that the boat couldn’t hold another cod. But Disko

and Tom Platt stacked the fish even higher. And there was still a little salt left.

Luckily, a *Parry Norman* man sprained an ankle. Soon after, Disko and his men salted their last cod. The crew of the *We're Here* won the winner's right to hoist her flag! Everyone cheered. This was the fifth year in a row that Disko had finished first.

The *We're Here* headed toward home.

"Hattie's pulling the string," Dan said to Harvey. "Hattie and Ma. Guess you'll stay with us until your folks come. Do you know what's best about coming home?"

"A hot bath?" Harvey guessed. On the *We're Here*, a bath was a bucket of cold water.

"A hot bath's good," Dan agreed. "But a new nightshirt's better! Ma'll have a new one for me, all washed soft. It's *home*, Harve! Ye can sense it in the air."

It was night by the time they spotted land. A summer storm blew in. Through flashes of lightning, they could make out the low hills around Gloucester Harbor.

The storm died out as they approached land. Suddenly, Disko shouted, "The flag,

boys! The flag! For Otto. They can see us from shore now!"

The flag was quickly lowered to half-mast. This was in honor of Otto, the young man who had drowned before Harvey came on board.

Disko led the *We're Here* to the wharf. Harvey could feel the land close around him. Thousands of people were asleep here! He could smell the earth after rain.

Then a man on the dock threw a rope and they tied up to the silent wharf. The *We're Here* was home.

Harvey sat down by the wheel and sobbed as if his heart would break. Dan's mother hurried on board and kissed her son on the cheek. She'd seen the *We're Here* through the lightning flashes. She took no notice of Harvey until Dan told her his story. Dawn was breaking as they went to Disko's house.

The next morning, Harvey sent a telegram to his parents.

S **8**

A Family Reunion

Whatever his private sorrows may be, a multimillionaire must keep on top of his business. Harvey Cheyne, senior, had gone east to meet his wife. She was half-mad, dreaming day and night of her son drowning. She wanted to be assured that drowning didn't hurt. Her husband watched over her and worried about her.

As for himself, Harvey's father didn't even know the depth of his own sadness. Then, one day, he caught himself talking to the calendar on his desk. "What's the use of going on?" he was asking.

Mr. Cheyne had spent little time with his son. He'd thought they'd have time together in the future. When Harvey was finished with college, Mr. Cheyne would take him into the business. Then they'd become instant friends,

partners, and do great things together. But now the boy was dead—lost at sea.

He had taken his wife to a new house in San Diego. One wing was for her, her doctors, and her maids. Cheyne, along with a secretary and a typist, had an office on the veranda.

As the secretary opened the mail, Cheyne listened to him wearily, hardly hearing what the man said. Then someone making a delivery knocked at the door. The secretary's face turned white.

He passed a telegram to Cheyne. It was from Harvey.

Cheyne let the telegram fall. He laid his head down on the desk, breathing heavily. A few moments later, he ran to his wife and blurted out the news. A joyful shriek rang out through the house.

"We're going clear across the country!" Cheyne shouted to the secretary. "Arrange for my private railcar, the *Constance*, to be connected straight through. I want there to be no delays!"

"We've got a heap to do," the typist said as she and the secretary swung into action.

Soon railroad connections were confirmed.

On Sunday, the Cheynes left San Diego at dawn. "We're going to hurry, Mama, just as fast as we can," Cheyne said to his wife. "But it will take a while. You might as well take off your bonnet and gloves."

"Taking off my bonnet makes me feel as if we'll never get there," Mrs. Cheyne said.

In three days and 15 hours, they arrived in Gloucester. Harvey was waiting for them.

* * * *

The three Cheynes went out for a family feast. Harvey ate, drank, and told his story, all in one breath. Whenever he had a free hand, his mother held it tenderly.

His father watched him closely. He was used to judging men, but he realized how little he knew about his son. What he remembered was a doughy-faced boy who often made his mother cry. But *this* boy looked at him with clear, steady eyes. His voice actually had a respectful tone. And something about his manner promised that this new Harvey had come to stay.

"Why didn't you tell this Disko Troop to

put you on shore?" the mother was saying. "You know your papa would have paid anything to get you back."

"I know it," Harvey said with a smile. "But he thought I was crazy—and he was angry. I'm afraid I'd called him a thief. That was because I couldn't find the money in my pocket."

"A sailor found it by the flagstaff—that night," sobbed Mrs. Cheyne.

Harvey nodded. "So that explains it," he said. "But I don't blame Disko any. I said I wouldn't do any work on the boat. And, of course, he hit me on the nose."

"My poor darling!" Mrs. Cheyne gasped. "They must have abused you horribly."

Harvey just shook his head. "Well, no. After that, I saw the light."

Cheyne slapped his leg and chuckled. Here was a boy after his own hungry heart.

"I can't do a man's work yet," Harvey went on. "But I can handle a dory almost as good as Dan. And I don't get rattled in a fog—much. I can bait up a trawl line pretty well, and I know my ropes, of course. The *We're Here* was the first boat to finish the season.

When the fish are counted tomorrow, we're getting paid!"

"Do you mean you're supposed to work tomorrow?" Cheyne asked.

"Yes, sir. I'm in charge of the numbers," Harvey said as he proudly pulled out a greasy notebook.

"Hire a substitute," Cheyne suggested. He wanted to see what Harvey would say.

"Oh, no, I can't, sir!" Harvey said firmly. "Why, counting the catch is my job."

"I see," Cheyne said. "Well, I guess you'd better get some rest then. I'll arrange to have the *Constance* moved closer to the wharf while you're sleeping."

The next morning, Harvey went out before dawn to join the crew of the *We're Here*. The *Constance* had been moved to within walking distance of the docks. An hour later, his parents stepped down from the railcar.

As they walked to the wharf, they could hear Harvey's clear voice. He was checking the weight of the fish, which were heaped in huge baskets.

Finally, the hold of the *We're Here* was completely emptied. "That's it, then. What's

the total, Harve?" Disko asked.

"All told it's three thousand, six hundred and seventy-six dollars *and* a quarter," Harvey reported.

Pretending to be an idle onlooker, Cheyne walked up to Dan and pointed at Harvey. "Who's that boy?" he asked.

"He was a passenger on an ocean liner," Dan said. "He fell overboard and we picked him up. He's just about a fisherman now."

Cheyne pretended surprise. "Huh! Is he worth his keep?" he asked.

From hints that Harvey had dropped that morning, Dan had figured out that this was Harvey's father. But he played along with the game and called out to his dad. "This man wants to know if Harve was worth his keep."

"Harve's a good boy," Disko said. "You tell him what to do and he gets it done. Except for him and my boy stealing fried pies from the cook, I can't find any fault with him."

In the meantime, Dan told the rest of the crew that Harve's folks had come. "Dad ain't caught on yet," he said with a wink. "Come and see him caught in a mistake for once!"

9 **Preparing for the Future**

Long Jack and the others got there just in time. Cheyne was saying, "I'm glad you say the boy has a good character. He's my son."

Disko's jaw fell. Later, Long Jack would vow that he had heard it click.

Disko was nervous. "I—I made a mistake," he gulped. "I don't mind telling you that, Mr. Cheyne. At first I thought the boy was crazy. He was kind of babbling about money."

"So he told me," Cheyne said.

"Did he tell you anything else? Because I pounded him once," Disko said. He glanced anxiously at Mrs. Cheyne.

"He told me that, too," Cheyne said. "I think it probably did him more good than anything else in the world."

Mrs. Cheyne had been studying the men. Disko's face was hard; Tom Platt's was scarred.

Uncle Salters' farmer's haircut looked out of place. Penn wore a bewildered look, Manuel's smile was quiet, and Long Jack grinned with delight.

Half sobbing, she said, "Oh, please tell me, which is who? I want to thank you and bless you—all of you!"

Then Harvey took the whole crew to see the *Constance*. They all stared silently at the silver door handles and rare inlaid wood. "*I told you!*" he cried out. This was his crowning revenge, and he enjoyed it fully.

Mrs. Cheyne invited the whole crew to dinner at a local boarding house. During dinner, she waited on them herself.

Meanwhile, Cheyne and Disko smoked cigars. Mr. Cheyne could tell that Disko was not a man to accept money. He also knew that no amount of money was enough to pay for what Disko had done for Harvey.

"What plans do you have for your son?" Mr. Cheyne said casually.

"Well, Dan's just a plain boy. He don't allow me to do any of his thinking. But he'll have the *We're Here* someday," Disko replied.

“You know, I have six clipper ships called the ‘Blue M’ line,” Mr. Cheyne said. “I ship tea from Japan to San Francisco.”

Disko’s eyebrows shot up. “Harvey never told me that!” he said. “I would’ve believed his story then. Why, Phil Airheart, from this very town, is a mate on one of those ships. Why didn’t Harvey say so?”

“He didn’t know,” Cheyne explained. “I only bought them this summer.”

“If I’d known that,” Disko went on, “I’d have jerked the *We’re Here* right back home.”

“Perhaps that wouldn’t have been so good for Harvey,” Cheyne said. “But here’s what I was getting at: I’d like to know if you’d lend me Dan for a year or two. Let’s see if we can’t make a mate of him. Would you trust him to work for Airheart?”

Disko flushed with pride. “I ain’t recommending Dan special because he’s my flesh and blood,” Disko said. “But he can steer a boat. There’s no boy better.”

Then they talked to Disko’s wife. Her eyes were sad, but she said yes. “When Dan was little,” she said, “he used to play at having a

store. But as soon as he could paddle a dory, I knew I didn't have a hope."

"She just despises the sea," Disko said to Cheyne. "And I don't know how to act polite, or I'd thank you better."

"Every year we lose a hundred boys and men from this town alone," Disko's wife said. "The sea took my father, my elder brother, two nephews, and my sister's man. Wouldn't you hate it, too, Mr. Cheyne?"

Cheyne was relieved when Dan turned up. The boy accepted the offer with more delight than he could put into words.

The cook lugged all his own belongings from the *We're Here* to the *Constance*. His dreams had told him his future: From now on, he would follow Harvey wherever he went.

At first, they argued with him. But Cheyne laughed. After all, Harvey might need his own servant someday. And a man who volunteered was always better than a man who was hired. The cook had made it clear that he wasn't concerned about pay.

Harvey and his father had a talk. Cheyne said, "The future rests with you, Harvey. You

know I can't do anything with you if you don't act straight with me. When you're grown up, you can go on living on me—if that's what you choose. You could have a valet and a yacht. Or you could have a fancy ranch and pretend to be raising horses."

"Suppose I don't want a yacht and ranch and living on the old man," Harvey said with a twinkle in his eye.

"Why, in that case, you could come right into the business with me, son," Cheyne said.

"At ten dollars a month?" Harvey asked.

"Not a cent more until you're worth it," Cheyne said. "And you won't begin to touch that for a few more years. I don't want you to start in too soon. That's the mistake I made."

"But you've made thirty million dollars! Thirty million worth of mistakes doesn't sound bad to me," Harvey laughed.

"I gained some and I lost some, I'll tell you," Mr. Cheyne said. Then he pulled on his beard and talked on. After a while, Harvey realized he was hearing the story of his father's life.

Cheyne had been a young boy, alone,

without a family. Along the way, he'd endured a hundred changes and chops of life. The scenes shifted from state to western state. He'd lived in towns that sprang up in a month and died away in a season. Then there were wild camps that later became paved cities. He'd seen gigantic wealth missed by the slightest accident of time and travel. He'd taken part in the building of three railroads and the deliberate destruction of a fourth. He'd been acquainted with ships, towns, forests, and mines—and men of every nation under heaven.

For most of his life, Cheyne had traveled on horseback—but more often on foot. He'd been rich, then poor, in and out, back and forth. The man had moved through it all—quiet and alert, seeking his own dream. And, so he always said, the glory and good of his own country.

He told his son of the faith that had never deserted him, even at the edge of despair. This was the faith, he explained, that comes of knowing men and things.

The story made Harvey almost breathless.

At last, Cheyne tossed away his cigar butt. "I never told that to anyone before," he said.

Harvey was dumbstruck. "That's just the greatest thing that ever was!" he gasped.

"Now listen to me, son. That's what I *got*," said Cheyne. "Now I'll tell you what I *didn't* get—an education. I can handle men, and I'm no fool. But I can't compete with a man who's been *taught*. And it sticks out all over me."

"Huh? Well, *I've* never seen it," Harvey said indignantly.

"You will, though, Harve—" Cheyne assured him, "just as soon as you're through college. You've got to soak up all the learning that's around. You must learn enough law to look after your own property when I'm not around. You'll have to be solid with the best men in the market. Before it's too late, you need plain, solid book-learning. *Nothing* pays like that! And it's bound to pay more and more each year in our country."

"Four years of college!" Harvey groaned. "I wish I'd chosen the valet and the yacht."

"Think it over, son," Cheyne insisted. "All that work will bring a lot of reward."

We'll talk some more about it tomorrow."

The next morning, Harvey made a deal with his father. He wasn't interested in railroads or lumber or real estate or mining. What he yearned for was control of his father's clipper ships. That was his goal. For his part, he promised four or five years of hard work at college.

"It's a deal," his father agreed.

* * * *

Time passed. Now it was a few years later, on the other side of America. A young man on horseback rode up a wide street lined with expensive houses. He stopped at an iron gate, where another young man came up to him.

"Hello, Dan!"

"Hello, Harve!"

"What's the best with you?" Harvey asked.

"Well, it looks like I'm going to be second mate on this trip," Dan said. "Ain't you about through with that expensive college of yours?"

"Just about. Looks like I'm coming into the business this fall."

"Meaning you'll be in charge of the clipper



ships now—just as the cook predicted,” Dan said with a chuckle.

“Nothing else,” Harvey replied. Then he asked Dan to come in the house with him.

“Say, is our old friend still around?” Dan asked. “I’m going to drown that crazy feller someday—him and his joke and all.”

They heard a low chuckle. The ex-cook of the *We’re Here* had come out to take the horse’s bridle. He allowed no one but himself to take care of Harvey’s needs.

The big, black man tapped Dan on the

shoulder. Once again he whispered the old, old prophecy in Dan's ear: "Master—man. Man—master. You remember, Dan, what I said on the *We're Here* that day?"

"Well, it surely looks like things stand that way now. I won't deny it," Dan said with a smile. "The *We're Here* was a noble boat. And one way or another, I sure do owe her a heap—her and Dad."

"Me, too," Harvey Cheyne said.

CAPTAINS COURAGEOUS

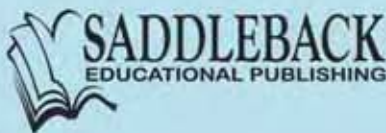
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